
Education Committee

HB 1727

Brief Description: Changing dropout reporting requirements.

Sponsors: Representatives Curtis, Wallace, Skinner, Springer, Bailey, Walsh, Tom and Santos.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Directs the Academic Achievement and Accountability Commission (A+ Commission) to adopt high school graduation rate and dropout reduction goals for grades seven through twelve.
- Expands the grade range for which school districts must report dropout data by including grades seven and eight with grades nine through twelve.

Hearing Date: 2/14/05

Staff: Sydney Forrester (786-7120).

Background:

Washington's Graduation Rate Goals

The A+ Commission is authorized, but not required, to adopt dropout reduction goals for students in grades seven through twelve. Goals must be established by rule, and require legislative review prior to adoption. The Commission has adopted goals for some but not all of the authorized indicators.

The current graduation rate goals adopted by the Commission were established in 2003 and apply only to schools serving 30 or more high school students. For each of the years 2004 through 2013, the graduation rate goal is the lesser of: (a) the statewide average graduation rate for the class of 2002 (approximately 66 percent); or (b) the school's own 2003 graduation rate plus one percentage point annually. In 2014, the graduation rate goal for all schools is 85 percent, and this goal applies to all subgroups defined in the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.

At its December 2004 meeting, the Commission considered the establishment of dropout reduction goals for grades seven and eight, but elected to postpone action on this issue until it can be determined whether the data reporting capabilities for seventh and eighth students are sufficiently in place. At its February 2005 meeting, the Commission established proposed revisions to high school graduation rate goals, and recently requested to schedule legislative review of those proposed revisions.

School District Reporting and Graduation and Dropout Statistics

School districts are required to report annually to the SPI regarding the number of high school students who dropout in each of the grades nine through twelve, including the dropout rates of students according to ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, and disability status. Districts also report regarding the causes and reasons attributed to dropping out as reported by students.

In the 2002-03 school year, an estimated 7 percent of all high school students dropped out of school. Of the 2003 graduating class cohort (those students who entered grade nine in 1999) approximately 24 percent dropped out before graduating, and another 10 percent were still enrolled at the end of twelfth grade. The on-time graduation rate for Washington high school students in 2003 was approximately 66 percent.

Summary of Bill:

The A+commission is directed to establish dropout reduction goals and high school graduation rate goals for grades seven through twelve.

School districts are required to include grades seven and eight in their annual report to the SPI.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.